

CLAIMS:

1-11. (cancelled)

12. (currently amended) A reader ~~as claimed in claim 1 comprising~~ for an electronic radio frequency identification system comprising a plurality of transponders to be read by the reader, the reader comprising:

a first recovery circuit for recovering and separating an upper sideband and a lower sideband of a modulated response signal from one of the transponders;

a first evaluating circuit for evaluating and selecting one of the upper sideband and the lower sideband for output to a next stage, based on the evaluation; and

a second recovery circuit for recovering and separating an upper sideband and a lower sideband of a modulated response signal from one of the transponders.

13. (currently amended) A reader as claimed in claim 12 wherein the response signal is coupled to the second recover circuit by a second directional coupler cooperating with ~~the~~ a strip line.

14. (original) A reader as claimed in claim 13 wherein the first and second directional couplers are spaced from one another an electrical distance of between  $\lambda_c/4$  to  $\lambda_c/6$  along the strip line.

15. (original) A reader as claimed in claim 12 wherein the second recovery circuit comprises a second image reject mixer having a first output for the lower sideband and a second output for the upper sideband.

16. (original) A reader as claimed in claim 15 comprising a second switch for selecting between the first output and the second output of the second mixer in response to a selection signal from the evaluating circuit.

W 17. (original) A reader as claimed in claim 16 wherein an output of the second switch is connected to a second data decoder for providing decoded data.

18. (original) A reader as claimed in claim 17 wherein an output of the first data decoder and an output of the second data decoder are connected to a selection switch and wherein the selection switch is operative to connect a selected one of the output of the first data decoder and the output of the second data decoder to an output of the selection switch in response to a control signal from the evaluating circuit and based on minimum requirements for errors in the decoded data.

19-20. (cancelled)

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